REMARKS

The rejections presented in the Office Action dated September 28, 2005 have been considered. Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Applicant acknowledges the allowance of claims 3-6, 10-13, and 17-20 if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 1 is amended to more distinctly claim the invention and correct informalities. Claim 7 is amended to include the limitations of claim 8 and correct informalities, and claim 8 is canceled. Claim 14 is amended to more distinctly claim the invention and correct informalities. Claims 10-13, 17, and 19 are amended to correct typographical errors and not for purposes of patentability.

The claims and Abstract were generally objected to and the Office Action suggested replacing "physical block" with --physical block--. Applicants assume that the Examiner intended replacement of "pblock" with --physical block--. Instead of replacement, the claims and Abstract have been amended at the first reference of "pblocks" to -- physical blocks (pblocks) --.

Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Office Action fails to show that claims 1-2, 7-9 and 14-16 are anticipated by US patent 6,170,080 to Ginetti et al. ("Ginetti") under 35 USC §102(b). The rejection is respectfully traversed because the Office Action fails to show that all the limitations of the claims are taught by Ginetti. Ginetti teaches a one-to-one assignment of cells in the logical hierarchy to physical areas, except when physical areas are merged (col. 4, lines 13-18; col. 6, lines 6-10), and to merge physical areas, at least two cells having physical areas are selected or some physical areas are selected and then a merge physical area command is selected (col. 8, lines 63-65; col. 13, lines 24-29). Ginetti appears to teach that the physical areas must be leaf components of a subtree of the logical hierarchy or a merging of the physical areas of the leaf components of the subtree. In particular, Ginetti appears to teach that a first and second instance of the logical hierarchy cannot be set to different physical areas when the second instance is contained within the first instance (col. 8, lines 39-65).

In contrast, various embodiments of the invention allow any instance of the logical netlist to be assigned to any of the pblocks without regard to the hierarchical

structure of the logical netlist as claimed in independent claims 1, 7, and 14, including assigning first and second instances to different pblocks when the second instance is contained within the first instance. In addition, claim 7 includes limitations that a tool is provided to a user to assign instances from a displayed representation of instances defined by a netlist into pblocks in a displayed hierarchy of pblocks. As discussed above, Ginetti teaches using commands to set cells to physical areas and Applicant cannot find any teachings in Ginetti related to assigning instances of a displayed representation. Thus, claims 1, 7, and 14 are not shown to be unpatentable by the Office Action because all of the limitations of these claims are not taught or suggested by Ginetti.

Claims 2 and 15 are dependent claims of independent claims 1 and 14. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the base claims and recite additional features, which further distinguish these claims from the cited references. For example, claims 2 and 15 include limitations directed to dragging of a selected instance, and as discussed above Ginetti does not appear to provide any teachings on dragging of a selected instance. Thus, the Office Action does show that these claims anticipated.

Claims 9 and 16 are dependent claims of independent claims 7 and 14, respectively. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the base claims and recite additional features, which further distinguish these claims from Ginetti. For example, the Office Action does not identify any teachings of Ginetti related to exporting floorplan directives as set forth in these claims. Thus, the Office Action fails to show that claims 9 and 16 are anticipated.

The rejection of claims 1-2, 7-9, and 14-16 as being anticipated by Ginetti should be withdrawn because the Office Action fails to show that Ginetti teaches all the limitations of the claims.

CONCLUSION

Reconsideration and a notice of allowance are respectfully requested in view of the Amendments and Remarks presented above. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, a telephone call to the undersigned is invited.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. BOX 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on November 8, 2005.

Julie Matthews
Name

Signature